

# WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO EDUCATION FOUNDATION, INC.

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P.O. Box 280 Princeton Junction, New Jersey 08550-0280 609-716-5014  
Email: [info@wwpef.org](mailto:info@wwpef.org) Website: [www.wwpef.org](http://www.wwpef.org)

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Date: December 18, 2006**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Contact: Marcia Smith Fleres, Executive Director*

**West Windsor-Plainsboro** – What do astronomy; audio books, Millstone River Ecology Site, musical instruments and Digital DNA Gel Analysis have in common? They are some of the innovative educational programs that have been funded by the West Windsor-Plainsboro Education Foundation, Inc. The WW-P Education Foundation’s Board of Trustees awarded over \$12,000 for twenty mini-grants to teachers and students in the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional Schools for 2006-2007.

This would not be possible without the generous support of Bristol-Myers Squibb and Merrill Lynch who each gave \$5,000 to the WW-P Education Foundation to support the Mini-Grant Program. Merrill Lynch’s grant also supports the WW-P High School Scholarship Program. “We are pleased to have both Merrill Lynch and Bristol-Myers Squibb as partners in our mission to foster educational excellence in the West Windsor-Plainsboro schools”, says Marcia Smith Fleres, executive director.

### **Helping Students Who Stutter**

**Bonnie Engel Lee, Speech & Language Specialist**

#### **Dutch Neck Elementary School**

The project uses DVDs and printed materials from the Stuttering Foundation to educate parents, teachers, speech and language specialists and students. In-service training will be provided for speech and language specialists throughout the school district.

### **All Aboard Reading**

**Karen Krech, Barbara Sheridan, Gina Hopkins, Kristine Luberto, teachers**

#### **Maurice Hawk Elementary School**

This project will foster emergent reading skills in ESL (English as Second Language) students as they read to their families from the emergent reader books on topics from their science and social studies curricula. Parents will be shown early reading strategies to use with their children.

**Math Matters – Making Kids Feel “At Home” with Math (*Sponsored by Merrill Lynch*)**

**Nancy McCaffrey, Basic Skills Math Teacher**

**Maurice Hawk Elementary School**

Through the integration of math and reading, this project will use the Math Matters Series to improve students’ awareness and understanding of math in their everyday lives. The Math Matter Series uses individual stories to introduce new math concepts to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and enhance students’ interest and discussion skills.

**Astonishing Astronomy: Star Bound (*Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb*)**

**Lisa Stamile and Keith Van Doren, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers**

**Millstone River School**

This project will reach all 4<sup>th</sup> graders in the school. It will enhance the new astronomy science kit with computer software, 3-D solar system models, binoculars and telescopes for night time Star Parties.

**Electricity Enhanced (*Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb*)**

**Michael Jones, Beth Eaves, Keith Van Doren, Luis Ramirez, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers**

**Millstone River School**

This project will enhance the fourth grade electric circuits kit by supplying materials that will provide additional hands-on experiences, support a variety of learning styles, and extend the content of the kits, and enable teachers to expand student learning through enrichment materials.

**Professor Nemo’s Salt Water Aquarium (*Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb*)**

**Sven Strnad and Lizbeth Reil, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers**

**Millstone River School**

Fifth graders will apply basic chemistry concepts as they establish and maintain a 55 gallon salt water aquarium. These concepts connect the “mixtures and solutions” science kit to real world application. The aquarium will be set up in a common area of the school for all students to learn and enjoy.

**Speaking Out: Bringing Stories to Special Populations (*Sponsored by Merrill Lynch*)**

**Heidi Wachtin, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher**

**Millstone River School**

Through storytelling, fourth grade students will learn to interpret text, enhance their public speaking skills and gain an appreciation for technology and the arts as tools to reach out to others. They will bring their festival of stories to those who cannot come to them: senior citizens and hospitalized children.

**Music Materials for the Preschool Handicapped Children (*Sponsored by Merrill Lynch*)**

**Diane Kosar, Special Education Teacher**

**Millstone River School**

Music instruments and materials will be purchased and used during daily music time in the special education preschool program.

**Science, Math and (Art)isan Bread Baking (*Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb*)**

**James Eng, teacher**

**Village School**

Artisan bread baking involves math, science, and art in a classic, creative, hands-on, fun-filled way. This project will endeavor to teach the children the art of baking French bread while physically representing academic concepts they have learned.

**Career Exploration- Developmental Guidance Lessons (*Sponsored in part by Merrill Lynch*)**

**Lynn Fisher, Colleen Pedersen, Faith Hancock, Ellen Burgess, Guidance Counselors**

**Community Middle School**

Seventh and eighth grade students will explore career choices in our rapidly changing world of work. They will match their personal interests and strengths to the universe of job possibilities by using “the Career Game”

**Audio Books for Below Grade Level Readers**

**Ginny McNeil, Literacy Lab Teacher**

**Thomas R. Grover Middle School & Community Middle School**

This project will benefit 8<sup>th</sup> grade struggling readers by providing audio books to read along with their class novel, *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. It will support student comprehension, improve vocabulary and motivate students to actively participate in discussions and reader response activities.

**Future City Competition**

**David Meni, Siddharth Pant, Mahesh Reddy, Jared Meltzer, Alex Gerber, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Thomas R. Grover Middle School**

The goal is to design and build a city of the future virtually and physically in a model. The end result will be to go to a state competition. This is a new pilot project, and if it is a success, the students hope that future students will be able to have an opportunity to engage in an innovative and educational club.

**Building an Educational Amphitheater (*Sponsored by Merrill Lynch*)**

**Jason Kuo, Student and Boy Scout; James Looney, Teacher**

**WWP High School North**

The project will design, build and maintain an amphitheater made of wooden benches at WWP High School North.

**Improving the Millstone River Ecology Site (*Sponsored by Merrill Lynch*)**

**Peter Maa, student and Boy Scout; James Looney, science teacher**

**WWP High School North**

The Millstone River ecology study site at High School North will be renovated and extended to 2900 feet in length. Woodchips will cover the trail and five benches will be installed at points of educational interest.

**Rider University’s PROBE Program (*Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb*)**

**Kristina Susca & Holly Sassinsky, Science Teachers**

**WWP High School North and High School South**

Environmental science students will be participating in Rider University’s PROBE Program, which is an aquatic ecological workshop at the Hamilton/Trenton marsh. Students will be contributing to authentic research in scientific study and will gain more awareness of environmental issues in their surrounding community.

**Support Group for At-Risk Students of Color**

**Linda Morrell, School Counselor**

**WWP High School North**

This lunch group for at-risk students of color will include guest speakers, career counseling and group sessions. Activities will focus on providing a support system for students with the goal of increasing student success in school.

**Echoes Poetry Workshops (*Sponsored by Merrill Lynch*)**

**Barbara Jetton, Teacher and Echoes Faculty Advisor**

**WWP High School South**

Students in Echoes will develop and conduct poetry workshops for students for grades 4-5 at Village School and Millstone River School. Workshops will introduce key concepts such as imagery and meter through reading classic poems by great poets, and writing poetry that explores and employs these concepts.

**Digital DNA Gel Analysis (*Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb*)**

**Matthew Foret and Meenakshi Bhattacharya, AP Biology Teachers**

**WWP High School South**

This project will allow students in AP Biology and the Waksman Club to use computers to analyze DNA gels.

**Smart Board in the High School Science Classroom (*Sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb*)**

**Katherine Heavers Princiotta, Christopher Trefz, teachers**

**WWP High School South**

Students will be able to view and manipulate a wide variety of images, from graphs of their data to virtual dissections. All notes from lectures will be available for access at any point in the future. Visual information of all kinds can be sent to all students so they can pursue study of class work at their own pace.

**Unity Day**

**Stacey Gasper, Caryn Vlassenko, Carlos Lopez, Kelly Fisher, Adam Jacyszyn, Eric Schnitter**

**WWP High School South**

The purpose of Unity Day is to recognize and embrace the similarities and differences of students from diverse social, cultural and academic backgrounds. Student volunteers will organize and run a field day for the diverse student population to eliminate stereotypes and misconceptions.

The West Windsor–Plainsboro Education Foundation, Inc. is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the continued excellence of the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional Schools. Founded in 1995, the foundation has awarded over \$164,000 in teacher grants for more than 200 innovative programs in the schools. For more information on the WWP Education Foundation, visit [www.wwpfef.org](http://www.wwpfef.org) or email [info@wwpfef.org](mailto:info@wwpfef.org).

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**Photographs**

Photograph 1: Grade 5 students at Millstone River School in the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District Julianna Haase, Hannah Sternbach, and Mollie Rubinstein prepare the aquarium at Millstone River School, a project funded by the WW-P Education Foundation.

Photograph 2: Diane Kosar, a preschool teacher at Millstone River School in the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, teaches music to her three-year-old preschool class with the instruments and materials she purchased with WW-P Education Foundation grant.

Photograph 3: James Eng (far left front) and his Village School in the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District students show off their baking skills, using a grant from the WW-P Education Foundation.